



COUNCIL MINUTES

February 12, 2009

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 12, 2009 at 7:32 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Dave Richins
Scott Somers

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

1. Review items on the agenda for the February 17, 2009 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

2. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on the 2009 Federal Legislative agenda.

Government Relations Director Scott Butler and Government Relations Coordinator Brent Stoddard addressed the Council relative to this agenda item.

Mr. Stoddard displayed a PowerPoint presentation (A copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) and provided a brief overview of various Federal Legislative issues of importance to the City of Mesa. He reported that on January 6, 2009, the first session of the 111th Congress convened and noted that as a result of the November 4, 2008 General Election, the Congress now has a Democratic majority. Mr. Stoddard stated that Arizona's Senators are Republicans John McCain and Jon Kyl and Mesa's Congressional Representatives are Republican Jeff Flake and Democrat Harry Mitchell. Mr. Stoddard added that on January 19, 2009, Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of the United States.

Mr. Stoddard advised that with regard to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, it is anticipated that an announcement would be made later today that the Senate and the House of Representatives have reached a compromise regarding the bill. He said that the Stimulus Package is estimated to total \$789 billion. Mr. Stoddard cautioned, however, that the ARRA was not designed, nor was it intended, to “flow down” to local municipalities. He added that the legislation would provide funding for infrastructure projects, Public Safety, aid to states, education and tax cuts.

Extensive discussion ensued relative to the fact that an estimated \$90 billion in Stimulus Package funding has been earmarked for infrastructure projects nationwide (approximately \$30 billion for surface transportation); that staff intends to aggressively monitor the legislation to ensure that local projects are given consideration for possible funding; that Mesa’s pool of “shovel ready” projects would be limited; and that the funds must be obligated within a relatively short period of time (180 days – Senate version of the bill or 75 days – House version).

In response to a question from Councilmember Somers, City Manager Christopher Brady clarified that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is limited to funding on-airport improvement projects. He briefly highlighted several high priority projects for the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, including taxiway infrastructure, runway and apron improvements and drainage infrastructure.

Mr. Butler further reported that the FY 2009 Federal budget has not yet been finalized and explained that the government is operating under a “continuing resolution” that is set to expire on March 6, 2009. He said that a compromise budget has been prepared for consideration after the ARRA is completed. Mr. Butler added that with regard to the FY 2010 budget, the appropriations process would begin in the coming months.

Mr. Butler also remarked that several issues have been identified for FY 2010, one of which is the reauthorization of the five-year Surface Transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU), which is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2009. He explained that the program provides funding for Federal road systems and networks throughout the country. Mr. Butler stated that Mayor Smith and members of the Council have expressed an interest in direct Federal funding to the region, and Phoenix-Mesa in particular, to meet the area’s high growth needs.

Mayor Smith commented that many intermountain states are “short changed” with regard to the percentage of Federal highway funds they receive as compared to other regions in the country. He stated that there have been discussions regarding the creation of a delegation representing Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Nevada that would address the region’s concerns relative to this matter.

Mr. Butler stated, in addition, that staff would continue their efforts to ensure that State Route 802 (Gateway Freeway) remains a priority item.

Mr. Butler indicated that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act expired in September 2007. He explained that in 2008, reauthorization was not completed, but said he anticipates movement on this bill in the coming months. Mr. Butler noted that the bill is important to the City of Mesa because it could fund various improvements at Phoenix-Mesa Gateway and Falcon Field Airports. He also commented that Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport is reapplying for

the five-year designation to be considered a part of the Military Airports Program, which addresses the costs of transforming former military airports to commercial civilian uses.

Mr. Butler advised that Mesa will continue to work with Valley Metro and Metro Rail to encourage the Federal government to support funding for buses and light rail in the region. He stated that Vice Mayor Jones, who serves as a member of the Valley Metro Rail Board, and Councilmember Somers, a member of the RPTA Board of Directors, are also monitoring this item.

Mr. Butler reported that with regard to the issue of Homeland Security, the City of Mesa continues to engage in ongoing efforts to obtain funding for 287(g) training and Public Safety communications interoperability. He added that the City would continue to pursue Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grants.

Mr. Butler addressed environmental issues and said that it is anticipated that \$1 million in funding to complete the design phase of the Va Shly'ah Akimel Project will be included in the FY 2010 Federal budget. He explained that Mesa has engaged in discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding the Salt River Multi-Use Pathway, a joint effort between Mesa, Tempe, and the Maricopa County Flood Control District. Mr. Butler also remarked that the pathway would extend along the southern bank of the Salt River between McClintock Road in Tempe to Alma School Road in Mesa.

Mr. Butler further advised that the City will continue to monitor air and water quality regulations and energy efficiency standards with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He stated that the East Valley Water Forum is a collaborative effort between Mesa and multiple agencies to provide water resource management in the East Salt River Valley.

Mr. Butler indicated that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have been a valuable tool for local communities to address quality of life projects and said that the current administration is expected to continue the program. He noted that the City would continue to monitor those funding levels. Mr. Butler also explained that Mesa was recently awarded a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which will be used to address abandoned and foreclosed properties in the City's 85204 Zip Code. He said that staff would also monitor the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) proposal to implement mortgage reform.

Mr. Butler also commented that the Sunbelt areas of the country have been disproportionately affected by the funding formula for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which primarily benefits residents in cold weather states. He said that many Arizona citizens require energy assistance during the summer months for cooling and air conditioning and noted that efforts would continue to pursue a more balanced funding formula.

Mr. Butler highlighted the Arts and Cultural area and noted that efforts are ongoing to gain support from the Department of Interior for the historic preservation of the Mesa Grande Cultural Park. He said that the City would also seek education funds for interactive exhibits at the Arizona Museum for Youth and added that cultural programming is being offered to at-risk youth at the Mesa Arts Center in conjunction with the Mesa Police Department.

Mr. Butler explained that regarding military affairs, Boeing is a major employer in the City of Mesa and stated that the City would continue to work closely with the corporation in promoting the Mesa site to the Arizona Congressional delegation. He added that the City would also cooperate with Boeing to support continued military funding of the Apache Program and encourage its expansion.

Mayor Smith commented that Mesa's first priority with regard to pursuing Federal funding for the previously mentioned programs and projects is for those projects that will bring the best return and most benefit to the community.

Mr. Brady also noted that many of the projects and programs would not compete with each other for funding (i.e., FAA program vs. the Va Shly'ah Akimel project). He added that the City endeavors to work within existing programs that have already been established with the Federal government and various agencies.

Mayor Smith thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Judicial Advisory Board meeting held October 1, 2008
- b. Economic Development Advisory Board meeting held December 2, 2008
- c. Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting held January 26, 2009

It was moved by Vice Mayor Jones, seconded by Councilmember Somers, that receipt of the above-referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Councilmember Finter:	"Building Strong Neighborhoods" Event in the Casa del Sol neighborhood
Vice Mayor Jones:	Solid Waste Collection Event at the East Mesa Service Center
Councilmember Somers:	Cessna Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport
Councilmember Kavanaugh:	Dobson Ranch Homeowners' Association Breakfast
Councilmember Richins:	"Canalscape" Symposium
Mayor Smith:	"Breakfast with the Mayor" Event

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, February 17, 2009, TBA – Study Session

Tuesday, February 17, 2009, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, February 19, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Saturday, February 21, 2009, 8:00 a.m. – District 6 Pancake Breakfast, Fire Station 205

6. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:49 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 12th day of February, 2009. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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